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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SF](#) [UK](#) [DE](#)

SUBJECT: EUROPE COURTS ZUMA

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Donald Teitelbaum. Reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) According to press reports, ANC President Jacob Zuma will travel to London, Paris, and Berlin during the last week of April. A French diplomat told PolOff on 11 April that Zuma was originally invited to France by the French equivalent of South Africa's Business Council, but will now also meet with French President Nicolas Sarkozy. The official date of the meeting with Sarkozy was yet to be decided. (NOTE: According to diplomatic rumors in Pretoria, this will be the third time Zuma has met Sarkozy -- first on a secret state visit in Paris in October 2007 and then again in February when Sarkozy was in Cape Town. END NOTE) Though the diplomat would not reveal the agenda, the Irish Ambassador on 14 April told PolOff that France has invested roughly 20 million euros into South Africa recently, which he described as "a drop in the bucket compared to what they will reap."

¶2. (C) Zuma also will travel to London on 23 April to meet Prime Minister Gordon Brown, according to British diplomats on 14 April. However, Brown will meet with Zuma as an official of Britain's Labor Party, not in his capacity as Prime Minister. Zuma's travel and meetings were arranged by John Battensby, who was described as "an ANC exile and a fixer." When asked what was meant by "fixer," one of the diplomats replied, "not a government official, but someone who makes things happen." They also would not give an agenda, but jokingly said that "this visit is not sucking up; it's engagement."

¶3. (C) A German diplomat told PolOff on 15 April that Zuma, along with ANC Head of International Affairs Ebrahim Ebrahim and ANC Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe, will be in Germany on 21 April. He said that Germany hosts a big coalition of "post-democratic parties" every year and that the Social Democratic Party invited the ANC this year, along with the Congress of Indian Workers Party and Brazilian President Lula da Silva's Workers Party. When asked whether Zuma would meet with Chancellor Angela Merkel, the diplomat dryly replied, "We are not at that stage yet." Zuma will instead meet with Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, he said. (COMMENT: Germany's investigation into corruption related to South Africa's 1999 arms deal likely makes this awkward. END COMMENT)

¶4. (C) COMMENT. These meetings signal the ANC's intentions of putting Zuma forward to the world as a player to be recognized. Some European capitals are responding, hoping that high-level meetings like these will lay the groundwork

for future engagement.
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